

Her Other Father by YumKiwiDelicious

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Summary:

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It hit him like a slap to the face and he sighed, rubbing a palm roughly over his eyes.

"Jesus, I'm sorry," he assured, "She gets that from her father."

Her Other Father

Jonathan huffed as he slumped down further in the uncomfortable plastic chair. Off to his right Barb sat kicking her feet back and forth and adamantly avoiding his gaze every time he tried to catch her eye. The woman at the desk a few feet away paid them absolutely no mind, typing away on her computer, glasses sat primly on the edge of her nose. She wasn't the same woman that had acted as secretary when Jonathan had been Barb's age, but they could have been twins. He wondered if there was a certain sort of physical check-list you had to meet when applying for the job. Not that he knew or wanted to know anyone interested in becoming an elementary school secretary. Who would want to spend more time than they had to in a place like this?

"Mr. Murphy will see you now."

The only other two people in the office jumped as the thin woman spoke up robotically, not removing her eyes from the glare of her screen as she motioned with one hand towards the second door in the room. She hadn't gotten a call and Jonathan hadn't seen anyone nod through the office window, but he took her word for it, nodding his thanks as he took to his feet and motioned Barb to follow him.

"Ah, Mr. Wheeler, pleasure to finally meet you. I'm used to seeing Mrs. Wheeler at these meetings."

The principal of Barb's school was a man not unlike the actual Mister Wheeler. He was average height, average build, with an average haircut, and was all around just...average. He rose minimally from his seat to reach across his pristine desk and offer Jonathan a handshake. He accepted and rated it average just like everything else while giving his apologies about having work during most school functions. The man waved him off good-naturedly, stating that he understood completely. Jonathan tried not to sigh because it was good of him to excuse Jon's frankly glaring absence from his daughter's school activities, but he didn't enjoy that the man seemed to think he got a free pass simply because he worked. Nancy worked too.

"It's actually Jonathan Byers," he correct gruffly rather than voicing

his thoughts, not missing the way the man's eyebrows rose and he chortled lowly to himself as they all were seated. Barb hopped into his lap.

"I see," Mr. Murphy huffed, "Why buy the cow when you can get the milk for free, eh?" Jonathan didn't laugh at his joke and the principal cleared his throat loudly before looking down at a sheet of paper scrawled across messily with chicken scratch handwriting. "Yes, we did have some trouble today, it says here, during mathematics."

Barb peeked over her shoulder at Jonathan, her messy curls not hiding the faint blush over her cheeks as she fidgeted under his disapproving glance.

"Yes?"

"It seems during class today Barbara told another student to 'piss off'."

Jonathan's eyebrows shot up in confusion and he completely missed the other man's recount of the event as he racked his brain for where his little girl could have learned such a phrase. Nancy hadn't sworn in ages and Jonathan never did so within her hearing range...

It hit him like a slap to the face and he sighed, rubbing a palm roughly over his eyes as he subtly pinched his daughter's side. She jumped with a small squeak before settling down again.

"Jesus, I'm sorry," he assured, pinning the man across from him with a sincere look over Barb's head. "She gets that from her father."

The man's totally average smile tweaked at the edges a bit, clearly being restrained from frowning in confusion. He nodded slowly, as if trying to buy himself time, while reaching for a bottom drawer behind his desk. Jonathan assumed it was where more files were kept.

"But I thought..." he began, scanning over a folder he had pulled into his lap, out of site. He glanced up at Jonathan. "Aren't you her father?"

Jonathan snorted, pushing Barb lightly from his knees so he could

move to stand again. The principal looked like he was short circuiting internally as he kept glancing down into the file and the array of names printed there.

“Well, yeah,” Jon conceded, feeling a tiny hand slide into his own as he nodded to convey his move towards the exit, “Obviously I’m talking about her other father.”

He called a good day to the principal and even the secretary as he rushed back out into the hall, suddenly feeling very keen to hurry and get home so that he could have a talk with Steve. He glanced down at Barb who hummed a small tune to herself, nose upturned at him and small lips curved into a smile. He scoffed at her.

“Don’t look so happy,” he warned, swooping down to lift her to his hip without breaking stride. She was still small. “Mommy and Papa are not gonna be happy to hear about this one.”

She pouted dejectedly going on to state that her papa had told her to use the phrase if the boy that sat next to her in class continued to tug on her hair. Jonathan huffed, agreeing with Steve’s logic on paper, but not in practice. The two chattered about the incident back and forth all the walk to the car and on the car ride home. Jonathan eventually agreed that she was right in sticking up for herself, but not in using bad language. When they reached their not so average home, the little girl dashed out of the car, up the front porch and right into the house where she was greeted by Nancy looking frazzled from work but dazzling all the same.

When the young mother questioned her lover as to why the two were late coming home, he explained the issue at the school and how a teacher had caught him by the sleeve right as they were making their escape at pick-up time. He concluded the story with his words to Principal Murphy just as Steve joined them from upstairs, immediately attacking Barb in a barrage of noisy kisses that had the girl shrieking with laughter. Nancy cooley told her other lover he would be hearing from her about Barb’s language later and retreated into the kitchen to get dinner started. The two men watched her go, Barb eventually fussing to be put down so she could follow. Once the two women were out of the room Steve turned to Jonathan with a glaring pout.

“Why do you always have to blame me?”

Author's Note:

So this is just a short sweet one-shot to get this series started. It will center around the family of Nancy, Jonathan, Steve, and their daughter Barb. That dynamic will be explained in later chapters, But I feel like it's pretty self explanatory. Excited to get this out there and get the ideas flowing. I already created a gif set for this part on my tumblr account so feel free to go and check that out.

I hope you enjoyed it,
Thanks for reading!